

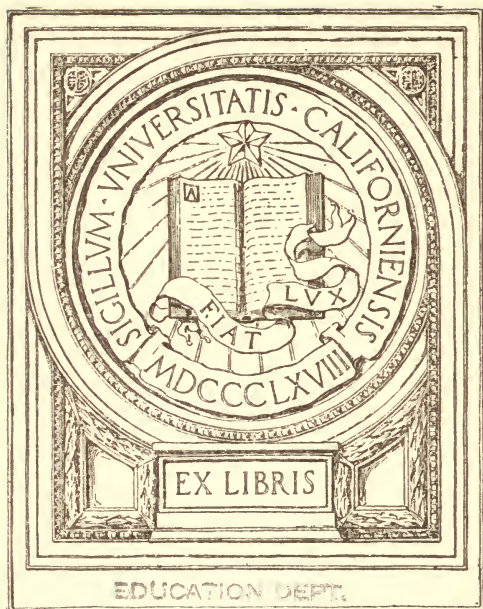
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John Adams
and
Daniel Webster
as
Schoolmasters.





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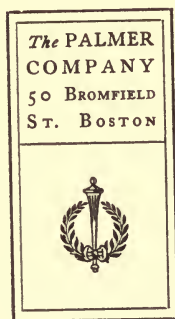


JOHN ADAMS.

TO THE
LIBRARY OF THE
CONGRESS

John Adams and Daniel Webster as Schoolmasters

INTRODUCTION BY THE
HON. CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS



By Elizabeth Porter Gould

Author of "Anne Gilchrist and Walt Whitman," "Gems from Walt Whitman," "Poems: Stray Pebbles from the Shores of Thought"

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Introduction



OME three weeks ago a Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution dedicated at Worcester, Mass., a tablet commemorative of the site of the original Worcester schoolhouse, — the site upon which, if not the house in which, John Adams taught immediately after his graduation from Harvard College, in 1755. It proved an occasion of interest, President G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University, and Senator George F. Hoar both contributing discriminating addresses of a character highly suggestive. Among the most interested of those present on this occasion was Miss Elizabeth Porter Gould, who subsequently called my attention to a paper she had prepared relating to the experiences of John Adams during his Worcester school-teaching, and of Daniel Webster during a similar experience at Fryeburg, in the State of Maine. This paper she asked me to read over, and I have since complied with her request.

Prepared as a labor of love, but with great thoroughness, I found that Miss Gould's sketch had an unquestionable interest of its own. The youthful school-teaching of two such very eminent men in New England history as John Adams and Daniel Webster could not but well repay any reasonable amount of investigation; and that given to it by Miss Gould has been fruitful of results.

It is, of course, much to be regretted that both John Adams and Daniel Webster should not have put on

record more concerning the surroundings and conditions under which they taught, in the one case a century and a half, and in the other a little over a century ago. Every educational condition has since changed. When the two men, freshly graduated from college, but afterwards so famous, presided over village schools, those schools were frequented by children of both sexes and all ages. The offspring of the vicinage there gathered. The "three R's," as they were called, only, were taught; but from the alphabet up to reading, writing, and arithmetic, the whole work of instruction devolved on the single teacher. Schools of this sort are now rarely found, and only in the most remote districts. Then, and indeed down to a time within the easy recollection of those now living, they existed everywhere. Unfortunately, it never occurred to either President Adams or Mr. Webster that the time could possibly come when the commonplace, every-day, humdrum experience they were going through would be of the deepest interest to great numbers of the most highly educated men and women of the succeeding centuries,—men and women who make a life-long profession of what was to those others a temporary bread-earning expedient. All that the most thorough investigation can now disclose are the general outlines of a system then universal, but which has since ceased to exist.

These outlines Miss Gould has traced with indefatigable patience. Meanwhile, studying the subsequent career of the two statesmen in the light of her narrative, it might afford another subject of curious inquiry

to endeavor to portion out the educational advantage each of them himself derived from that close contact with the material out of which the New England community of their later careers was composed, as compared with the degree of learning it was given them to impart to others. It is probably not unsafe to conclude that the balance of benefit was distinctly and largely on their side. They both got more than they gave.

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

BOSTON, June 16, 1903.

Part One

John Adams
as a
Schoolmaster

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA



BIRTHPLACES OF JOHN ADAMS AND JOHN QUINCY ADAMS
AT QUINCY, MASS.

John Adams



ACCORDING to an ordinance of the General Court of Massachusetts in 1647 that a town of fifty householders should have a school, Worcester, four years after its incorporation in 1722, had hired its first schoolmaster. Five years later, "whereas many small children cannot attend ye School in ye centre of ye Town by Reason of ye remoteness of their Dwellings, and to ye intent that all Children may have ye benefite of Education," the town voted a suitable number of "schoole Dames," or "Gentlewomen, to be placed in ye Several parts of ye town as ye Selectmen may think most convenient."

Upon the town's increase to one hundred families or householders, a grammar school according to law became a necessity; and in 1755 the clergyman of the town, Rev. Thaddeus Maccarty, was empowered by the selectmen to provide a schoolmaster. Naturally turning to Harvard College, at the commencement exercises of that year he was especially impressed with one of the graduates, John Adams, of Braintree, Mass. The good scholarship, bold thought, strong language and evident sincerity of the young man, not quite twenty years of age, seemed to him a good recommendation for the teaching career. His standing in social life was learned from the fact that he was number fourteen in a class of twenty-four; for pupils were then placed in the order of the supposed rank or dignity of parents, the alphabetical order in their names and places not being in use until nearly twenty years later.

Before the return of the clergyman John Adams was engaged to teach the school. Three weeks later a horse and an attendant were sent from Worcester to Braintree to take him to the new field of labor. He was then living with his parents on the Adams farm, his birth-place. The old house is now (1903) the headquarters of the Adams Chapter of the Daughters of the Revolution,—Mrs. Nelson V. Titus, Regent,—through whose efforts it was restored in 1897.

Among his friends was John Hancock, also a native of Quincy, who, then about eighteen years of age, had graduated from Harvard College the year before. Dorothy Q. was still alive in the old Quincy mansion on Hancock Street we visit to-day; and living with her was her niece, Dorothy Quincy, who afterwards became the wife of John Hancock. Abigail Smith, whose home was in the neighboring town of Weymouth, was often a guest with relatives in Quincy. But John Adams left all these associations to go away to teach school.

Worcester at that time, with its fifteen hundred inhabitants, was not what it was even at the end of the century. Twenty-eight years were to elapse before the running of the first regular stage from Boston to Worcester, and nearly twenty before even the stage should pass through the town from Boston to New York. Many more years were to pass before the first passenger train should run over the Boston and Worcester railroad.

Upon arriving in the town John Adams went to board,

at the town's expense, at Major Nathaniel Greene's, who had been one of the three to carry into effect the town vote to maintain a grammar school. Private subscriptions of Hon. James Putnam, Judge John Chandler and other prominent citizens of the town aided in the work. The little schoolhouse—sixteen by twenty-four feet—to which he came stood in what is now Lincoln Square, having been built some seventeen years before, 1738, as the first schoolhouse of Worcester. The salary could not have been large, for the sum appropriated for the support of the schools was only seventy-five pounds, having been that year increased from sixty pounds.

Thus, as the town schoolmaster, this brave young man of nearly twenty began his work. It was not long before he was writing a promised account of the "situation of his mind." But the "natural state of his faculties being insufficient for the task," he felt obliged to invoke the "muse or goddess who inspired Milton's pen" to help him "sing things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme." The result of this in a letter to his college friend, Richard Cranch, dated Sept. 2, 1755, is as interesting to-day as when it was written, for it reveals a poetic tendency of the man which later circumstances did not tend to develop.

When the nimble hours have tackled Apollo's coursers, and the gay deity mounts the eastern sky, the gloomy pedagogue arises, frowning and lowering like a black cloud begrimed with uncommon wrath to blast a devoted land. When the destined time arrives he enters upon action, and as a haughty monarch ascends his throne, the pedagogue mounts his awful *great chair*, and dispenses right and justice through his whole

empire. His obsequious subjects execute the imperial mandates with cheerfulness, and think it their high happiness to be employed in the service of the emperor. Sometimes paper, sometimes his penknife, now birch, now arithmetic, now a ferule, then A, B, C, then scolding, then flattering, then thwacking, calls for the pedagogue's attention. At length, his spirits all exhausted, down comes pedagogue from his throne, and walks out in awful solemnity through a cringing multitude. In the afternoon he passes through the same dreadful scenes, smokes his pipe, and goes to bed. Exit muse.

Considerable uneasiness was manifest in the beginning of this school experience. John Adams craved a larger sphere. The large number of "little runtlings, just capable of lisping A, B, C, and troubling the master," made the school to him a "school of affliction." In spite of Dr. Savil telling him for his comfort that by "cultivating and pruning these tender plants in the garden of Worcester" he would make some of them "plants of renown and cedars of Lebanon," he was certain that keeping it any length of time would make a "base weed and ignoble shrub" of him.

There was for him comparatively little knowledge of the outside world, since it was twenty years before the *Massachusetts Spy*, the first publication in Worcester, was published, and seventy before a daily paper was issued there. In this lonely life among strangers the new school-teacher turned to the friends who had cheered his college days, particularly to Charles Cushing and Richard Cranch. Absence from them pained his heart while his philosophical mind cried, "But thus it is, and I must submit." At one time he longed

for a letter from Richard Cranch "to balance the inquietude of school keeping." "Pray write me the first time you are at leisure," he implored. He requested him to see his friend Quincy,—the Hon. Josiah Quincy, who afterwards bought and lived in the Hancock house in Quincy,—"and conjure him, by all the muses," to write him a letter. "Tell him that all the conversation I have had since I left Braintree is dry disputes upon politics and rural obscene wit. That, therefore, a letter written with that elegance of style and delicacy of humor which characterize all his performances would come recommended with the additional charm of rarity, and contribute more than anything (except one from you) towards making a happy being of me once more."

All correspondence was effected with difficulties, since it was twenty years before the establishment of a post office in Worcester. But, after all, this new life, instead of suppressing, stimulated his native energies. This is seen in the prophetic thought of a letter written after he had been in Worcester about six weeks to his friend and kinsman, Nathan Webb, beginning thus: "All that part of creation which lies within our observation is liable to change. Even mighty states and kingdoms are not exempted."

It was evident that he was moved by the existing state of affairs. George II was then King of England, and Shirley, as Governor, was leading the Massachusetts Colony under its second charter. George Washington, then a young man of twenty-three, had made himself felt in the war against the French and Indians. This

was the year of the expulsion of the French from Nova Scotia and of Braddock's defeat. Louisburg had been taken. Regimental headquarters were at Worcester, causing tents to whiten the surrounding country. "Be not surprised," wrote the young schoolmaster, "that I am turned politician. This whole town is immersed in politics. The interests of nations and of the *dura* of war make the subject of every conversation. I sit and hear, and after having been led through a maze of sage observations, I sometimes retire, and by laying things together, form some reflections pleasing to myself."

In this letter he showed a clear perception of the nature of friendship, which he calls "one of the distinguishing glories of man," when he declared, "In this, perhaps, we bear a nearer resemblance to unembodied intelligence than to anything else. From this I expect to receive the chief happiness of my future life."

His capacity for friendship was somewhat satisfied in the Worcester people, whom he soon found to be "sociable, generous, and hospitable." He often dined, drank tea, or spent an evening with Major Chandler, Major Gardiner, Mr. Welman, and others. One evening he was discussing with Major Greene the "divinity and satisfaction of Jesus Christ"; another, he was wondering with Major Gardiner whether it was not the design of Christianity to make "good men, good magistrates, good subjects, good children, good masters, and good servants," rather than "good riddle-mongers and mystery-mongers"; another time he was making observations with his friends concerning the "prodi-

gious genius, cultivated with prodigious industry," of Mr. Franklin,—then about fifty years of age,—who was coming back from Europe with a reputation enlarged on account of electrical experiments. He doubtless was familiar with the sayings of Poor Richard in the almanacks then making their appearance. He may have discussed them with his first Worcester friend, the Rev. Mr. Maccarty, as they supped together. Doubtless they discussed Jonathan Edwards as preacher at Northampton, or as president of Princeton College. One wonders if they even heard of the name of Swedenborg, then coming before the world with his writings; or of Händel, then old and blind; or of Bach, who had died only a few years before. Had Pope's new edition of Shakespeare reached them? or his translation of the *Iliad* and *Odysey*? It is possible they knew of Dryden's metrical translation of Virgil. But whether or not they discussed these classics, we do know they dwelt on religious subjects; that the young teacher revealed the same line of thought that was seen in a letter he wrote in his old age, at eighty-five, to Prof. John Gorham when he said, "I believe with Father Abraham and Sir Isaac Newton in the existence of spirit distinct from matter, and resign to the Universal Spirit the government of his heavens and earth."

In spite, however, of growing convictions on religious subjects, the young schoolmaster attended Mr. Maccarty's church, the only one in town; for it was not until after the death of this minister, in 1784, that another church—the Unitarian—was organized. Years

afterwards in a letter to Dr. Aaron Bancroft, its pastor for over fifty years, John Adams, in referring to the old days, said: "Mr. Maccarty, though a Calvinist, was not a bigot; but the town was a scene of dispute all the time I lived there. When I left I entered into a scene of other disputations at the bar, and not long afterwards disputations of another kind in politics." So he felt he had had his share of controversy. But, after all, he declared, upon acknowledging the receipt of Dr. Bancroft's sermons, that they were most satisfactory in expressing the result of his "reading, experience, and reflection." "How different," he concluded, "from the sermons I heard and read in the town of Worcester from 1755 to 1758."

Although Mr. Maccarty's successful ministry of thirty-seven years in Worcester was effective and appreciated by the people, yet human nature was such that while he was there a warrant for town meeting was announced, "For ye Town to Come into Some method that People may sit in ye Seats (in the meeting-house) assigned to prevent disorders, and that they don't put themselves too forward."

In Worcester, as in college, John Adams lived up to his determination to sow no wild oats. The thought of marriage then, as ever before, was, according to his own confession, a stimulant to make himself worthy of the finest woman the world could offer him. And those who know the story of his wedded life of fifty-four years with Abigail Smith, of Weymouth, know that he was fully rewarded for his determination.

Some of the schoolmaster's observations concerning the affairs at friendly gatherings must have been scattered among the people. In a letter written to his friend Cushing in April, 1756, he said, "There is a story about town that I am an Arminian." This, however, did not trouble him, for he then, as later, believed in a free discussion of all subjects. Meanwhile he succeeded in his school work, and became by springtime quite "contented in the place of a schoolmaster." In the diary which he began while in Worcester, he gives us a pleasant picture of his school at this time. He invokes no muse, however, but trusts to the natural strength of his faculties, which it will be remembered he dared not do before. "I sometimes, in my sprightly moments, consider myself in my great chair at school as some dictator at the head of a commonwealth. In this little state I can discover all the geniuses, all the surprising actions and revolutions of the great world in miniature. I have several renowned generals but three feet high, and several deep, projecting politicians in petticoats. I have others catching and dissecting flies, accumulating remarkable pebbles, cockle shells, etc., with as ardent curiosity as any virtuoso in the Royal Society. Some rattle and thunder out A, B, C, with as much fire and impetuosity as Alexander fought, and very often sit down and cry as heartily upon being out-spelt as Cæsar did when at Alexander's sepulchre he recollected that the Macedonian hero had conquered the world before his age. At one table sits Mr. Insipid, foppling and fluttering, spinning his whirligig, or play-

ing with his fingers as gaily and wittily as any Frenchified coxcomb brandishes his cane or rattles his snuff-box. At another sits the polemical divine, plodding and wrangling in his mind about 'Adam's fall, in which we sinned all,' as his Primer has it. In short, my little school, like the great world, is made up of prigs, politicians, divines, LL.D's, fops, buffoons, fiddlers, sycophants, fools, coxcombs, chimney sweepers, and every other character drawn in history, or seen in the world." He revealed the secret of his success as a teacher when he asked if it is not the "highest pleasure to preside in this little world, to bestow the proper applause upon virtuous and generous actions, to blame and punish every vicious and contracted trick, to wear out of the tender mind everything that is mean or little, and fire the new-born soul with a noble ardor and emulation. The world affords no greater pleasure." He found by repeated experiment and observation in his school, that human nature was more easily wrought upon and governed by "promises, encouragement, and praise, than by punishment, threatening, and blame." He was, however, cautious and sparing of praise, "lest it become too familiar and cheap, and so contemptible." He observed that "corporal as well as disgraceful punishments" depressed the spirits, while "commendation enlivened and stimulated them to a noble ardor and emulation."

Outside of school hours, when not with his friends, he was absorbed in reading and study. His mind dwelt much upon "religious themes and miracles." When

he first went to Worcester he was inclined to the ministerial profession. To this end he copied large extracts from the works of Tillotson and others. One morning he rose at half past four and wrote *Bolingbroke's Letter* on retirement and duty; another time he wrote his *Reflections on Exile*. A volume still remains in a very minute hand filled with passages from the works of various authors. But how limited the reading matter compared to that of to-day! Walter Scott, Jane Austen, Thackeray, Byron, Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Carlyle, Tennyson, the Brownings, Emerson, Whitman, and a host of modern poets were not born. Goethe was only a child. But there was Milton, with whom he was greatly impressed; and there was Addison, with whom he was charmed. He had Shakespeare, and, best of all, the Holy Scriptures, which he studied for their literary as well as spiritual value. His aspiration of soul indicates unusual moral attainment for so young a man. "Oh," he cries, in a moment of self-examination, "that I could wear out of my mind every mean and base affection; conquer my natural pride and self-conceit; expect no more deference from my fellows than I deserve; acquire that meekness and humility which are the sure mark and character of a great and generous soul; subdue every unworthy passion, and treat all men as I wish to be treated by all! How happy should I then be in the favor and good will of all honest men and the sure prospect of a happy immortality!"

Like all noble, sensitive natures, he had his moments of discouragement. One time, alone in his chamber

after the day's teaching, longing for knowledge, he wrote in his diary, "But I have no books, no time, no friends; I must therefore be contented to live and die an ignorant, obscure fellow."

Possessing, however, what he esteemed the essential marks of a good mind,—“honesty, sincerity and openness,”—he overcame such moods, and read all the books that came in his way. He also found time for social enjoyment. When at Major Greene's he came across *Morgan's Moral Philosopher*, which he found was being circulated with some freedom in the town. In the library of Dr. Nahum Willard, at whose house he went to board after leaving Major Greene's, he found Dr. Cheyne's works, Sydenham and others, and Van Swieten's Commentaries on Boerhaave. This general reading, as well as the reputation and skill of Dr. Willard, suggested the thought of his being a physician and surgeon. But on attending the courts of justice and hearing Worthington, Hawley, Trowbridge, Putnam and others, he was drawn more strongly to the study of law. This desire grew more and more upon him, especially since he could not conquer his serious objections to the profession of the ministry. He finally went to talk the matter over with Mr. James Putnam. The result was a contract to study law with him for two years. He agreed to the proposal to board with Mr. and Mrs. Putnam at the rate the town allowed for his lodgings. He also agreed to pay Mr. Putnam one hundred dollars when he should find it convenient. This plan involved keeping the school two years longer to pay expenses; for

he had taken up teaching in the first place not so much from choice, as from a desire to lighten the pecuniary burden his education had laid upon his father. "It will be hard work," he wrote his friend Cranch within a week after the contract, "but the more dangerous and difficult the enterprise, a brighter crown of laurel is bestowed upon the conquerer." His decision to take up the legal profession was not approved by his friends Cranch and Cushing. The former even advised him to reconsider his resolution and take up the ministry. His father's general expectation was for him to be a divine. His mother, although a religious woman, had no special desire for him in that direction. His uncles and relatives were bitterly prejudiced against the law, as was public sentiment at that time. But John Adams had made up his mind. He went at once to work in Mr. Putnam's office with the firm resolution "never to commit any meanness or injustice in the practice of law," and to endeavor to "oblige and please everybody, but Mr. and Mrs. Putnam in particular." In his diary for August 22, 1756, he said of this important move in his life: "Necessity drove me to this determination, but my inclination, I think, was to preach. However, that would not do. The study and practise of law, I am sure, does not dissolve the obligations of morality or of religion. And although the reason of my quitting divinity was my opinion concerning some disputed points, I hope I shall not give reason of offense to any in that profession by imprudent warmth." A month before writing this he had begun his second year at school. In order that

he might not lose any time, and do more than the year before, he had resolved then to rise with the sun and to study the Scriptures on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday mornings, and to study some Latin author the other three mornings. Noons and nights he intended to read English authors. This resolution was crowned with a determination to "stand collected" within himself, and to "think upon what he read and saw." The very day after he wrote this resolution in his diary it so happened that it was seven o'clock when he arose instead of sunrise. This for a July morning seemed inexcusable. But he grimly said, "This is the usual fate of my resolutions."

During the succeeding two years, in which six hours a day were devoted to school work, John Adams made good use of Mr. Putnam's library, particularly the "handsome addition of law books" and the works of Lord Bacon, which Mr. Putnam had sent to England for immediately after receiving into his office the new student. Upon his adding later Bolingbroke's works, as a result of reading the *Study and Use of History* and his *Patriot King*, which the schoolmaster had brought from his Braintree home, an opportunity was given to read the posthumous works of that writer in five volumes. Mr. Burke once asked who ever read Bolingbroke through. John Adams read him through then, and at least twice after that. But he confessed that he did it without much good or harm. He considered his ideas of the English Constitution correct, and his political writings worth something, "although there

was more of fiction than of truth." He thought his style original, "resembling more the oratory of the ancients than any writings or speeches he ever read in English," but his religion was a "pompous folly, his abuse of the Christian religion as superficial as it was impious."

Among the multitudes of law books which John Adams read while teaching school in Worcester were *Wood*, *Coke*, two volumes of *Lillie's Abridgment*, two volumes of *Salkeld's Reports*, *Swinburne*, *Hawkins' Pleas of the Crown*, *Fortescue*, *Fitzgibbon*, ten volumes in folio, besides octavos and lesser volumes, and many of all sizes that he consulted occasionally without special study.

But law was not always the subject of conversation. At breakfast, dinner and tea Mr. Putnam was commonly disputing with him upon some question of religion. Although he would agree to the extent of his learning and ingenuity to destroy or invalidate the evidences of a future state and the principles of a natural and revealed religion, yet he could not convince himself that death was an endless sleep. An earnest spirit ever pervaded his discussions as well as his actions. He wrote friend Cushing while there: "Upon the stage of life while conscience claps let the world hiss. On the contrary, if conscience disapproves, the loudest applauses of the world are of little value."

Colonel Putnam and his pupil often conversed on other subjects as they walked around the farm or went shooting together. In all his life in Worcester the

young schoolmaster found time to commune with Nature. He took great pleasure in "viewing and examining the magnificent prospects of Nature" that lay before him in the town. One lovely May day he "rambled about all day, gaping and gazing." He enjoyed the country drives to Braintree and back which his vacation visits afforded. He looked a little into agriculture and horticulture, in which in his last years he showed his continued interest by writing a bookseller, Joseph Milligan, on receiving a book on gardening, that he hoped he was not mistaken in his countrymen if they did not "carry the science and practice to greater perfection than there ever had been since this globe sprang out of nothing." He longed to assist in the work, but "Nature is exhausted and the lamp quivers."

The sessions of the Superior Court at Worcester brought to Colonel Putnam's office men whom John Adams delighted to meet. Here began the friendship with Jonathan Sewall, subsequently shadowed by the different sides they took in the Revolution of Independence. Years after, in spite of the broken friendship, Jonathan Sewall said of his old friend: "He has a heart formed for friendship, and susceptible of its finest feelings. He is humane, generous and open; warm in his friendly attachments, though, perhaps, rather implacable to those whom he thinks his enemies."

When John Adams' studies with Mr. Putnam were over, he was sworn as an attorney in the Superior Court in Boston, at the recommendation of the lawyer, Jeremy Gridley, then the attorney-general of the province.

The Worcester people having recognized the natural ability and scholarship of their successful school-teacher for three years, invited him to settle in their town. But, desiring a change for his health, he accepted his parents' invitation to live with them at the old home in Braintree, now Quincy. His father, the great-grandson of John and Priscilla Alden, of Mayflower fame, whose name for nearly forty years regularly appeared in the town records, died after he had been home two years. But he remained with his mother and his two younger brothers until his marriage in 1764. Then he went to live in the adjoining house,—now the home of the Quincy Historical Society,—where his son John Quincy was born.

In these waiting, wondering years he wrote in his journal: "Let no trifling diversion or amusement or company decoy you from your books; *i. e.*, no girl, no gun, no cards, no flutes, no violins, no dress, no tobacco, no laziness. Labor to get distinct ideas of law, right, wrong, justice, equity; search for them in your own mind, in Roman, Grecian, French, English treatises of natural, civil, common, statute law. Aim at the exact knowledge of the nature, end, and means of government."

In these growing years he did not forget his Worcester friends. In less than a year after he left the place he was spending a week in the town, dining and drinking tea as of old with Colonel Chandler, Doctor Willard, Major Gardiner, Colonel Putnam, and others. He occasionally attended Superior Court there, when he

would visit the office where he "formerly trimmed the midnight lamp."

Thirteen years after he had lived there, while spending a day with Mr. Putnam, he found the "pleasure of revisiting old haunts very great." He saw little alteration in Dr. Willard or his wife. His sons were grown up. He met Colonel Chandler and other old friends. Doubtless he was interested to see the second school-house built in the center of the town some seven years after he had taught there. He went to church and saw "many faces altered, and many new faces." He was especially pleased to meet many young gentlemen who had been Latin pupils in his school,—“John Chandler, Esq., of Petersham; Rufus Chandler, the lawyer; Dr. William Paine, who studied physic with Dr. Holyoke, of Salem; Nat. Chandler, who was studying law with Mr. Putnam, and Dr. Thaddeus Maccarty, a physician at Dudley.” Would that this diary had also preserved some of the interesting reminiscences of teacher and pupils which that day must have heard!

In 1795, forty years after John Adams had entered Worcester as its unknown schoolmaster, he visited the town as Vice President of the United States, George Washington being President. Though now crowned with honor and fame, the heart of the teacher, seeking old faces and old scenes, must, for the moment at least, have been master. Doubtless he missed the personal, friendly greeting of his old teacher-in-the-law, the Hon. James Putnam, who, years before, had gone as a refugee to Halifax, to become later a Justice of the Supreme

Court of New Brunswick. Now another element was in the air; that which a contemporary saw, who, in writing to Jeremiah Mason later of the visit to Boston, said: "But among the many great little events which agitate this puddle called Boston, the arrival of John Adams is one. People here tell me it is wise to make my rustic bow to the great man."

John Adams was not then the schoolmaster, receiving the homage of personal friends; he was the "great man," receiving the "rustic bow" of the people. One cannot but ask which was the dearer to the honored statesman.

If the spirits of just men made perfect know the fruits of their best endeavor on the earth, that of the noble statesman must have rejoiced at the recognition of the people of Worcester nearly one hundred and fifty years after his life among them; for on a beautiful May day of 1903, under the auspices of the Colonel Timothy Bigelow Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, a bronze tablet in a setting of Quincy granite was unveiled on Main Street between the Court House and the Antiquarian Hall, on the site of the first schoolhouse. The Hon. Stephen Salisbury, and others prominent in city and state, honored the occasion. Mrs. Annie Russell Marble, Chairman of the Committee (consisting of the Vice-Regent, Mrs. William T. Forbes, and others), whose researches through a pamphlet published by the Chapter had helped to positive knowledge, lifted the Stars and Stripes, assisted by Mr. Ellery B. Crane, Librarian of the Society of Antiquity. The great crowd

of people flanked by the Worcester Continental Guards, and led by the singing of "America," was then privileged to read the following inscription:—

IN FRONT OF THIS TABLET
STOOD
THE FIRST SCHOOLHOUSE
IN WORCESTER,
WHERE
JOHN ADAMS,
SECOND PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
TAUGHT 1755-1758.

PLACED BY
THE COLONEL TIMOTHY BIGELOW CHAPTER,
1903.

Preceding the unveiling an appropriate ceremony was held in the adjoining Unitarian Church,—the church bearing a tablet to the memory of its time-honored pastor, Aaron Bancroft, the friend of John Adams. Mrs. Daniel Kent, as Regent of the Chapter, presided, while state and national officers of the Daughters of the American Revolution paid their tribute. Senator George F. Hoar, Worcester's "most honored and best loved citizen," as he was introduced, made an effective address, as did the President of Clark University, G. Stanley Hall. Charles Francis Adams, President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, and a great-grandson of John Adams, then read his ancestor's account of the little school from the original diary he held in his hand (now printed in the works of John Adams, Volume II., page 9), every line of which was written in Worcester. Mr. Adams said he felt the manuscript belonged there.



A reception at the woman's clubhouse in charge of Mrs. C. C. Baldwin, closed the interesting occasion.

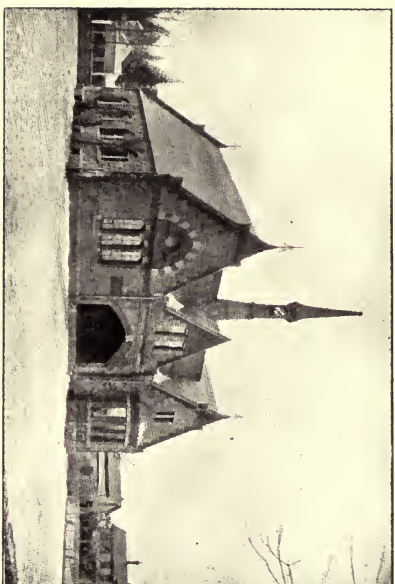
John Adams' three years of school teaching left a lasting impression on his mind and character. When he was an old man in the retirement of his Quincy home, looking back over a life honored even with the presidency of the nation, he said that while he kept school he acquired more knowledge of human nature than while he was "at the bar, in the world of politics, or at the courts of Europe." He certainly illustrated a warm, personal feeling at this time in a letter he wrote, over fifty years after his teacher life, to Amos J. Cook, the master who succeeded Daniel Webster as teacher of the Fryeburg Academy in Maine. After thanking him for the "elegant Translation of the Spanish Latin verses,"—the work of an eighteen-year-old pupil which he had sent him,—he said, "The sense and spirit of that morsel of purer morality than elegant Latinity is very well preserved in the Translation into English Rhyme, while the easy, natural air of an original Composition is given to it." He declared the young man certainly deserved "applause and encouragement." He was pleased to add that having showed the translation to his "Brother Cranch and to the Ladies of our Families who are all Lovers of Poetry, and some of them good Judges, they all applauded the Composition as having great merit."

While in this retirement John Adams was surprised to see the publication of his youthful Worcester letters to Charles Cushing in a Nantucket newspaper. Their ap-

pearance was to him a "riddle, a mystery beyond all comprehension." Upon receiving an explanation and apology from the son, who published them, the old patriot responded that while they had afforded some amusement to his friends, they had excited some tender reflections in himself. "I was like a boy," he wrote, "in a country fair, in a wilderness, in a strange country, with half a dozen roads before him, groping in a dark night to find which he ought to take." He then said that had he been obliged to tell his father the whole truth, he should have mentioned several other pursuits, such as "farming, merchandise, law, and, above all, war." He declared that "nothing but want of interest and patronage" prevented him from enlisting in the army. "Could I have obtained a troop of horse," wrote this old man of over eighty, "or a company of foot, I should infallibly have been a soldier. It is a problem in my mind to this day whether I should have been a coward or a hero."

In thinking over this Worcester life, he even went so far as to advise "every young man to keep school," for it was "the best method of acquiring patience, self-command, and a knowledge of character."

But a practical result of school work on John Adams was his gift to his native town of land for the purpose of establishing there a "school for the teaching of the Greek and Latin languages and any other languages, arts and sciences, which a majority of the ministers, magistrates, lawyers and physicians inhabiting in the said town may advise." Many years, it is true,



ADAMS ACADEMY, QUINCY, MASS.

elapsed before a "stone schoolhouse" could be built from the profits of the land. But it was at last erected—in 1872—on the site designated by the founder, over the cellar of the house in which Gov. John Hancock was born.

In this deed of land, dated July 25, 1822, the aged ex-President showed his appreciation of Governor Hancock (whose reverend father built the house) when he called him that "great, generous, disinterested, bountiful benefactor of his country, once President of Congress, and afterwards Governor of the state, to whose great exertions and unlimited sacrifices this nation is so deeply indebted for her independence and present prosperity." The following suggestion in the deed, given after the condition that the schoolmaster be "learned in the Greek and Roman languages, etc," was doubtless born of his own experience as a teacher when the methods of education were not so practical as now.

"But I hope the future masters will not think me too presumptuous if I advise them to begin their lessons in Greek and Hebrew by compelling their pupils to take their pens and write, over and over again, copies of the Greek and Hebrew alphabets in all their variety of characters. This will be as good an exercise in chirography as any they can use, and will stamp those characters and alphabets upon their tender minds and vigorous memories so deeply that the impression will never wear out."

It will always be a pleasant thought that this Adams School in Quincy is a legitimate outcome of John

Adams' successful three years' life as the grammar school master in Worcester. And it will ever compliment the honest patriot that its influence became more than local; for, as its faithful principal for many years, Dr. William Everett said in 1890 (at a Forefathers' Day dinner speech in New York), "This school, founded by John Adams' fellow-citizens, had from its opening been attended by pupils from every part of the Union." He declared that out of every text-book, from the first year to the last, from the history of England to the orations of Cicero, a chance had been found to draw the lesson that "the name United States takes a verb in the singular," and that they were, "as long as the Mississippi runs to the sea, many and yet one." That, he affirmed, was the patriotism of John Adams; that was the patriotism of New England scholars, her school-masters and her university men. If ever it had seemed otherwise, if ever the sister states had fancied that Massachusetts was sectional and not national, it had all been "a momentary cloud, a passing error." Her scholars saw the truth which John Adams taught, that "devotion to the Union was a moral duty; . . . and they would rather the Mayflower had never sailed than that the children of her company, spread as they were all over the Union, should have a love of country less wide than its limits."



DANIEL WEBSTER.

(AT AGE OF 20.)

Part Two

Daniel Webster
as a
Schoolmaster

“Not firmer on its base for ages past
Hath granite *Jockey Cap* withstood the blast,
Nor longer shall its memory remain
Than that which has been wrought on Fryeburg’s plain.

—Colby’s *Centennial Poem*.

Daniel Webster



EARLY fifty years after John Adams was teaching school in Worcester, another youth of twenty, Daniel Webster, is signing himself at the close of a letter to his friend Fuller, "The Schoolmaster."

"I cannot now address you as a brother-student-in-law," he wrote, "for I am neither more nor less than a schoolmaster." This was in February, 1802, some six weeks after he had become principal of the Academy in Fryeburg, Maine, then a "Province of Massachusetts." Immediately after graduating from Dartmouth College the August before, he had entered the office in Salisbury of a next-door neighbor of his father, Thomas W. Thompson, to study law. But he could not conscientiously pursue his studies while his brother Ezekiel, whom he had been instrumental in getting into college, was in need of funds to remain there; so, after four months of study, he decided "to earn money" by accepting an offer to teach for some months the Fryeburg Academy at a salary of three hundred and fifty dollars a year. The school was in good condition, having been since its incorporation some ten years before in the charge of Paul Langdon, a Harvard graduate and son of a Harvard president. Soon after, in January, 1802, a few days before he was twenty, the young law student left on horseback for his new field of labor, nearly one hundred miles away. He took with him his wardrobe (might not that have included the clothes and mittens of his college life,

which his mother spun, wove, dyed and made with her own hands?) and such books as he could carry in his saddlebags. He had not then attained to the full development of manhood. He was of slender frame, weighing less than one hundred and twenty pounds. His cheek bones were prominent in the thin face, especially noticeable for the full, large, searching eyes, which led to one of the townspeople calling him "All-eyes." Being once questioned as to his personal appearance when a pedagogue, he replied, "Long, slender, pale and all eyes; indeed, I went by the name of 'All-eyes' the country round."

Fryeburg at this time was a growing village of the White Mountain district, some fifty miles from Portland. For several years it had indulged in a post office, and had seen published (in 1798-99) a paper called *Russell's Echo, or the North Star*. It was noted for its activities, the young Daniel finding it, as he wrote soon after his arrival, "crowded with merchants, doctors and lawyers." He is visiting without ceremony "a good number of men of information and conversable manners," and calling, "with great pleasure and little ceremony," upon Judge Dana and his wife. But he did not find *Pequawket*—or Fryeburg—abounding "in extraordinary occurrences." "Yet nothing here is unpleasant," he adds. "There is a pretty little society. The people treat me with kindness, and I have the fortune to find myself in a very good family." This was in the new home (built in 1801 and burned in 1887) of James Osgood, Esquire, the Register of Deeds, who

showed a practical interest in the young man by offering him a shilling and sixpence—he himself received two shillings and threepence—for every deed he would copy in “a large, fair hand, and with the requisite care to avoid errors.”

Daniel gladly accepted the offer; for since he could copy two deeds in a winter evening, and so earn his board—two dollars a week—in four evenings, he would have about all his salary to give to his brother. This inspiring thought led to a faithful discharge of this duty, as seen to-day in a portion of two volumes of deeds in the Register's Office in Fryeburg.

But this outside work did not lessen in the least his success as a teacher. In the schoolroom, as well as in the town, he won the good will of all. The small one-story building in which he taught, built some eleven years before (1791), stood at the foot of Pine Hill. Upon its removal several years later (1809) to the site of the new schoolhouse, it is interesting to know that the ground on which it stood was purchased by a college friend, Col. Samuel A. Bradley, then settled as a lawyer in the town, and consecrated to the statesman's memory. Upon discovering one day that his hired man when sent to plough his adjoining land had ploughed into the Academy lot, Mr. Bradley ordered him to turn back every furrow in the consecrated place. The vacant lot, owned to-day by a Bradley—a niece of Samuel—is still consecrated to the schoolmaster's memory. This seems eminently appropriate, since it was through Webster's early intimacy with the Bradley family at Concord, N. H.,

that Webster was led to go to Fryeburg. But while Fryeburg holds so pleasantly in remembrance the site of the schoolhouse (which it is hoped will yet be adorned with a memorial building worthy of it), who does not love to picture the youth himself in the little building reciting to his pupils Pope's *Essay on Man*, which he had learned from beginning to end when a boy; or repeating one of the many Watts hymns he had learned before he was twelve years old; or telling some thrilling experience of his own boyish school days and struggles? It is possible he showed them the jackknife that his old teacher in the district school, Master Tappan, had given him for committing to memory the largest number of Bible verses learned between "a Sunday and a Monday." "Many of the boys did well," says the master in referring to it, "but when it came Daniel's turn to recite, I found that he had committed so much that after hearing him repeat some sixty or seventy verses, I was obliged to give up; he telling me that there were several chapters yet that he had learned."

Of course the future statesman told his pupils of the handkerchief with the Constitution of the United States on it, which he had bought in a shop in his native town when only eight years old. How could he help repeating parts which he had then learned? Doubtless he told them of Thomas Jefferson, then President of the United States, as a signer of the Declaration of Independence; of Washington, who had died but a few years before; or of John Adams, who, after his term as President, had retired to his Quincy home. He must have referred to

the stories his father had told him of his youthful life in the French and Indian War, or in the War of the Revolution, with Stark and Putnam.

The custom of this youth of twenty to open and close his school with extemporaneous prayer made a great impression. Years afterwards one of his pupils, Thomas P. Hill, wrote Professor Sanborn, of Dartmouth College, that he could never forget the "solemnity of manner with which that duty was performed." Perhaps there is only one other occasion in his life to be compared to it,—the repetition of the Lord's Prayer on his deathbed; when, having recited the first sentence, a feeling of faintness coming over him, he paused and exclaimed, earnestly, "Hold me up; I do not wish to pray with a fainting voice." Being raised, he repeated with wonderful distinctness the whole prayer, ending with these words: "And now unto God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost be praise forever and forever. Peace on earth and good will to men,—*that is the happiness, the essence, —good will toward men.*"

After Webster had been teaching four months, an exhibition of the school so pleased the trustees that they passed a vote of thanks to "Preceptor Webster," with the request that he "accept five dollars as a small acknowledgment of their sense of his service this day performed." In referring to this, Webster calls it a "small extraordinary gratuity."

He had intended to devote the short vacation that followed to the reading of Sallust, but upon receiving on the day of the exhibition the news of his brother

“Zeke’s” illness at college, he decided to go to him; so, mounting a horse, he took his first quarter’s salary—the first earnings of his life, he says—and went to Hanover to give it to his brother. He afterwards says of this act, “Having enjoyed this sincere and high pleasure, I hied me back again to my school and my copying of deeds.”

Besides copying his deeds, Daniel Webster wrote poetry, writing to a friend concerning it, “I do it by myself, not from any wish to show my productions to the world, but for amusement, and to keep alive some taste for the belles-lettres.” One letter to his friend Fuller (Habijah W.) he begins by writing the following twenty-five lines on Memory:—

Once more to prattle on her darling theme,
Once more to wake the soft, mellifluous stream,
That brings us all our blessings as it flows,
Those currents Friendship’s golden ore disclose,
The Muse essays her little skill;
And tho’ her lightsome lay
No master’s hand display,
Tho’ loose her lyre and wild her song,
Tho’ Seraph fire tip not her tongue,
The friend—oh! such a friend—will hear her still.
O Memory! thou Protean friend or foe,
Parent of half our joy and half our woe!
Thou dost the rapture which I feel impart,
And thou the griefs that press around my heart.
Thine is a motley train,—
Despondence there is seen,
And Sorrow, pale-faced queen,
And Gladness there, with merry face,

That ne'er did wear a sad grimace,
And buxom Pleasure sporting o'er the plain.

Next moment, lo! appears
Some plenteous cause of tears :
Some pleasure fled,—for pleasure flies,—
Or Symonds, sped beyond the skies,
And Memory cancels all the good she grants.

Here he suddenly stops and says, “But if I poetize further upon Memory I shall not have room to tell you half what I wish ; so, sweet Miss Muse, we will dismiss you.”

But every little while he called upon the Muse, confessing to his friend Fuller that he “rattled in as many as twenty rhymes while in that Province Fryeburg.” This he considered a “pretty large number for him.” The longest one seems to be that addressed to Mr. John Porter, which as given here may illustrate his style.

Health to my friends! began my earliest song;
Health to my friends! my latest shall prolong.
Nor health alone; be four more blessings thine,—
Cash and the Fair One, Friendship and the Nine.
Are these too little? Dost thou pant for fame?
Give him, ye Powers, the bubble of a name!
Ask all of Heaven an honest man should dare,
And Heaven will grant it, if it hear my prayer.
'Tis true—let Locke deny it to the last—
Man has three beings,—Present, Future, Past.
We are, we were, we shall be; this contains
The field of all our pleasures and our pains.
Enjoyment makes the present hour its own,
And Hope looks forward into worlds unknown;
While backward turned, our thoughts incessant stray,

And 'mid the fairy forms of Memory play.
Say, does the present ill affect thee more
Than that impending o'er a future hour?
Or does this moment's blessing more delight
Than Hope's gay vision fluttering in thy sight?
Call now the events of former years to view,
And live in fancy all thy life anew.
Do not the things that many years ago
Gave woe or joy, now give thee joy or woe?
In this review, as former times pass by,
Dost thou not laugh again, or weep, or sigh?
Dost thou not change, as changing scenes advance,—
Mourn with a friend, or frolic at the dance?
Think when thy worth attracted Symonds first,
And with new sorrow give him to the dust!
With present time thus Hope and Memory join,
This to bear back, and that to extend the line;
And all must own, except some learned dunce,
That every man lives three times and at once.
I'll state a case; but Vanity, the elf,
Obliges me to state it of myself.
In latitude some more than forty-three,
And longitude, say seventy-first degree,
Where Saco rolls (a name so rough and fierce
It frights the Muse to bring it into verse),
Tied to my school, like cuckold to his wife,
Whom God knows he'd be rid of, runs my life.
Six hours to yonder little dome a day,
The rest to books, to friendship and my tea;
And now and then, as varying fancies choose,
To trifle with young Mary or the Muse.
This life, though pleasant of its kind, is yet
Much too inactive; I'm resolved to quit.
Now Spring comes on, her milder sceptre yields,
And fairly fights stern Winter from our fields.
Yon grassy glade with gaudiest tulip dressed,

Where the Muse wanders, "willing to be pressed,"
Where "doves" gay frolicking on ulmar "boughs,"
Force one to instant rhyme of "Loves" and "Vows,"
Would be delightful, were that thing called mind
Pleased with the present and to fate resigned;
But on the soul, if wild ambition seize,
Farewell, as Horace sings, I think, to peace!
Our college life, whate'er the proud may say,
To our existence is the month of May.
O then I knew not, or I felt not, care;
Thoughts free as nature, and as light as air.
Yet even then,—ingratitude how base!—
We thought we lived in quite a piteous case,
E'en then we deemed our fates were much to blame,
And called Miss Fortune many a saucy name.
Though life's gay stream ran dimpling all along,
Smooth as the numbers of a tuneful song,
There we had friends enough, and books a score,
Appointments some, and disappointments more;
Could count the Muse, and, as you know, dispense,
For pretty little rhymes, with all our sense;
Could sit down sociable as Mother Bunch,
And "dip in sentiment," or "dip in punch."
May Heaven forgive the man who with all these
Cannot find cause enough to be at ease!
God gave me pride—I thank him; if he choose
To give me what shall make that pride of use,
Chance and the talent, I'll adore his will;
If he deny them, I'll adore it still.
Now Hope leans forward on Life's slender line,—
Shows me a doctor, lawyer, or divine;
Ardent springs forward to the distant goal,
But indecision clogs the eager soul.
Heaven bless my friend, and when he marks his way,
And takes his blessings o'er life's troubled sea,
In that important moment may he find

Choice and his friends and duty all combined !
And Heaven grant me, whatever luck betide,
Be fame or fortune given or denied,
Some cordial friend to meet my warm desire,
Honest as John and good as Nehemiah.

D. WEBSTER.

From the first of Daniel Webster's coming to this mountain village, so prettily situated above the broad intervalles of the Saco River, he inclined to be poetic. "If I had an engagement of love," he wrote his friend Samuel A. Bradley, on one of the fine spring days, "I should certainly arrange my thoughts of this morning for a romantic epistle. How fine it would be to point out a resemblance between the clear lustre of the sun and a pair of bright eyes! The snow, too, instead of embarrassing, would much assist me. What fitter emblem of virgin purity! A pair of pigeons that enjoy the morning on the ridge of the barn might be easily transformed into turtle-doves breathing reciprocal vows." Then feeling that perhaps he was becoming too sentimental, he exclaims, "But how shall I resist this temptation to be a little romantic and poetical? 'Loves' and 'doves' this moment chime in my fancy in spite of me. 'Sparkling eyes' and 'mournful sighs,' 'constancy of soul,' 'like needle to the pole,' and a whole retinue of poetic and languishing expressions are now ready to pour from my pen." The *cui bono* of the New England nature seeming then to shadow his fancy, he pauses to say: "But what a pity that all this inspiration should be lost for want of an object! But so it is. Nobody will hear

my pretty ditties unless, forsooth, I should turn gravely about and declaim them to the maid who is setting the table for breakfast ; but what an indelicate idea ! A maid to be the subject of a ballad ! 'Twere blasphemy. Apollo would never forgive me. Well, then, I will turn about and drink down all my poetry with my coffee. ' Yes, ma'am, I will come to breakfast.' "

Three months later, after tea, a lovely June evening, as he wrote his friend Fuller, he " lighted a cigar and took a turn among the meadows. . . . Nature was all smiling, and by a kind of sympathy she drew me in to laugh with her, and my resentments all went off in fume. . . . Were I a devotee to Cupid, I should improve this morning in penning something which I have heard called a love-letter. A romantic imagination might find, as I think, ample scope among meadows and dales, and ' moss-crowned banks,' and ' purling rills,' and ' songsters of the grove,' and ' morning breezes,' and other apparatus of love-poetry. How unfortunate that I neither am, nor can feign myself to be, in love with some Dulcinea of such beauty as ' paragons description,' such charms as force mankind to ' worship where they dare not love,' of such dignity and command in her aspect, and such unaffected modesty and reserve, that even ' her shadow dare not follow her when she goes to dress ! ' All those pretty sayings, picked up at the expense of so much time, must all be useless for lack of some one to address them to. Alas ! Alas ! "

But this poetic, romantic feeling did not distract the mind of the schoolmaster from more weighty matters.

He tells his friend of Mr. Fessenden's mother "having departed to the bourne whence no traveler returns," when, "with bright prospects of future felicity, she attended the summons without a murmur, and, full of years, sunk to repose on the bosom of her Maker." He speaks of having quite a lonely week because his friends—Dana and McGaw—had gone to Haverhill court. After wishing he could have a cup of coffee with his friend Samuel,—but even he is away,—he declares that this letter shall tell him that he is remembered "with much tenderness and esteem." *

Like John Adams in his schoolmaster days in Worcester, Daniel Webster longed for companionship of friends. If he could not see them he would have correspondence, though the mail came but once a fortnight. Yet friends, even the "misses," did not always satisfy. In referring once to an intended afternoon ride to Conway, which had been a topic of that day's conversation, he declared to Samuel Bradley that the "misses enjoyed it finely in prospect," and no doubt "the retrospect would be equally pleasant." But as for him, *ut ad me revertor*, such things were "most charming while future," and it was his object, therefore, to keep them future as much as possible.

But this youth of twenty rather enjoyed the "Maine misses." Speaking of them to his friend Merrill

* This letter to Samuel A. Bradley, framed in wood taken from the little schoolhouse in which Webster taught, is now—1903—a valued possession of the Hon. George B. Barrows, of Fryeburg, one of the Academy's most honored trustees.

(Thomas A.), he writes June 7, 1802: "In point of beauty I do not feel competent to decide. I cannot calculate the precise value of a dimple, nor estimate the charm of an eyebrow, yet I see nothing repulsive in the appearance of these Maine misses. When Mr. McGaw told me he would introduce me to the Pequawket constellation, it sounded so odd that I could not tell whether he was going to show me Virgo or Ursa Major; yet I had charity to put it down for the former, and have found no reason to alter my decision." He then says that being a pedagogue, and having many of the ladies in the school, he could not "set out in a bold progress of gallantry," but only now and then make one of them "his best bow" and say a few things "piano," as the musicians have it. Feeling, however, that "new towns had usually more males than females, and old commercial towns the reverse" (he was told that in Salem and Newburyport the majority of females was "immense"), he hoped that in Fryeburg his sex would "continue the mastery, though the female squadron was by no means contemptible." To another friend—H. W. Fuller—he wrote he had heard no "complaint of scarcity" concerning the misses. To his question as to how many misses were there he could not tell. "I forgot to bring a stick to cut a notch, like the Indian, for every one I see." He then tells of one passing that moment by his table who had given her opinion that "Mr. Webster was a very bashful man." Upon which he declared that he would "never give her reason to think otherwise. But these things are all vanity."

So concluded this staid schoolmaster of twenty. He had an eye, however, for the "nearly thirty white muslin trails across a ballroom on an evening," referring, doubtless to the balls held in the third story of Mr. Osgood's house, when "lighted candles and smiling faces" made all gay and joyous. Young ladies came on horseback through forests a long day's journey to attend the great ball of the year,—that which closed the annual exhibition of the academy. After hearing that his friend Fuller had enjoyed one of these pleasant dances, his serious nature asserted itself by declaring that dancing was a good, and, as he supposed, an innocent amusement, but "we never need go to halls and assembly rooms to enjoy it. The world is nothing but a contra-dance, and every one, *volens, nolens*, has a part in it. Some are sinking, others rising, others balancing, some gradually ascending towards the top, others flamingly leading down; some cast off from Fame and Fortune, and some again in a comfortable *allemande* with both. If you should ask me what station I should allot myself in this dance of life I should be staggered to tell you, though I believe, by some confounded ill luck, I have slipped a foot, and am fairly on the knee here in Pequawket."

While in Fryeburg the young teacher made good use of the Social Library which the town afforded, finding books there he had not been able to find in Hanover. He and his roommate read aloud alternately the *Spec-tator* and *Tatler*, and had discussions upon English literature. At one time, as an amusement, he says, he

is perusing the *Pursuits of Literature*; a book which "had exerted so much curiosity among the learned, and called down so much condemnation from the Democracy." He declared that "the scantiness of the poem itself and the abundance of notes" brought to his mind Sheridan's elegant metaphor of a neat rivulet of text meandering through a meadow of margin." Among other books he read while there he mentions Adams' *Defence of the American Constitution*, Mosheim's *Ecclesiastical History*, two or three volumes of Blackstone's *Commentaries*, and Mr. Ames' celebrated speech on the British treaty, which he committed to memory. He made it an object to investigate facts concerning the political history of the United States, taking up for one thing Williams' *Vermont*. He watched the political horizon, daring even to criticise President Jefferson; as, for instance, report having reached him that the marshal of New Hampshire had been removed, he confessed he did not much expect it. "But these are Jefferson's doings, and they are marvelous in our eyes." In this same letter (to Thomas A. Merrill, June 7, 1802) he says "the waning orb of Democracy must soon be eclipsed. The penumbra begins to come on already." He revealed an interest in leading men of the day, which he had shown in the following lines he wrote on Washington when a senior at college.

Ah! Washington, thou once didst guide the helm,
And point each danger to our infant realm;
Didst show the gulf where faction's tempests sweep,
And the big thunders frolic o'er the deep;
Through the red wave didst lead our bark, nor stood,

Like ancient Moses, the other side the flood.
But thou art gone,—yes, gone, and we deplore
The man, the Washington, we knew before ;
But, when thy spirit mounted to the sky,
And scarce beneath thee left a tearless eye,
Tell what Elisha then thy mantle caught,
Warmed with thy virtue, with thy wisdom fraught.
Say, was it Adams? was it he who bare
His country's toils, nor knew a separate care ;
Whose bosom heaved indignant as he saw
Columbia groan beneath oppression's law ;
Who stood and spurned corruption at his feet,
Firm as "the rock on which the storm shall beat."
Or was it he whose votaries now disclaim
Thy godlike deeds, and sully all thy fame?
Spirit of Washington! oh, grant reply,
And let thy country know thee from the sky.
Break through the clouds, and be thine accents heard,—
Accents that oft mid war's rude onset cheered.
Thy voice shall hush again our mad alarms,
Lull monster faction with thy potent charms,
And grant to whosoe'er ascends thy seat
Worth half like thine, and virtues half as great.

At this time of his life his roommate declared that "Mr. Webster did not entertain any adequate expectations of his future eminence, or, if he had them, he concealed them." But the secretary of the trustees of the Academy prophesied that if "Mr. Webster should live and have health, and pursue a straightforward course of industry and virtue, he would become one of the greatest men his country had produced,"—a prophecy which has been richly fulfilled.

His pupils in their reminiscences of him all speak of

his modest and dignified manner. Rev. Dr. Samuel Osgood—a son of the man with whom he boarded—remembers him as “usually serious, but often facetious and pleasant.” “He was an agreeable companion,” he adds, “and eminently social with all who shared his friendship. He was greatly beloved by all who knew him. His habits were strictly abstemious, and he neither took wine nor strong drink. He was punctual in his attendance upon public worship. I never heard him use a profane word, and never saw him lose his temper.” This “remarkable unanimity of temper” which he ever manifested in school was a “matter of common observation,” according to the testimony of another pupil,—Thomas P. Hill.

While in Fryeburg, Webster enjoyed fishing and gunning, although one of his pupils tells us that even when off on an excursion he would take a volume of poetry from his pocket to read. He often went to the fields and hills for recitation and study.

The following store account for the time he was in the town, copied from an old ledger of John and Robert Bradley (brothers of Samuel), suggests a practical side of the life there:—

DANIEL WEBSTER, DR.

1802.

Jan. 9.	To soap 6d (12) Ribbon 8d Comb 6d (30) Quills	
	18 6d	\$.53
Feb. 2.	Pencil 7d (6) Ring 5s (10) Silk 5d	1.00
Feb. 12.	Book 4s 6d (13) Segars 9d (20) Raisins 9d	1.00
Feb. 23.	Sundries 3s 3d (March 1) Segars 9d67
March 4.	Raisins etc. (10) Wafers 4½ (16) Paper 2s 4d45

1802.

March 19.	Raisins 5d (Apr. 7) 1 sq. Glass 6d Watch Key	
1s		\$.32
Apr. 10.	Hose 7s 6d (17) 3 1-8 yds. velvet, 8s 6d per yd.	5.68
Apr. 17.	$\frac{1}{2}$ yard B. hollon 1s 2d 2 skeins silk 1s 2d	.38
Apr. 17.	Buttons 1s (29) 20 cents lent 1s 2d	.37
Apr. 29.	1 best whip 9s May 18th 1 Quire paper 1s 6d	1.75
May 18.	1 bunch quills 1s 4d $\frac{1}{2}$ bushel corn 1s 9d	.52
June 1.	1 box wafers 5d June 5 one powder flask 1s 9d	.36
June 5.	$\frac{1}{4}$ lb. powder 1s 2d June 7 one quire paper 1s 6d	.44
June 8.	One bunch segars 9d, June 9th cash lent 30s	5.13
June 12.	Pair silk hose 14s 6d (17) 1 paper ink powder 9d	2.54
July 1.	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb. raisins 5d (3) one skein silk 5d	.14
July 5.	To cash 18s (6th) $\frac{1}{4}$ m Quills 1s 6d	3.25
July 19.	1 penknife 4s $\frac{1}{2}$ quire letter paper 10d	.80
July 29.	1 yd. ribband 6d (31st) 1 pair gloves 4s	.75
Aug. 2.	Two dozen quills 1s 4d 2 yds. cassimere 14s 6d	
	per yd. silk 1s 2d twist 1s 2d	5.26
Aug. 2.	$\frac{1}{2}$ yd. linen 1s 2d ferret 3d buttons 7d 4 small	
	buttons 4d	.38
Sept. 3.	One trunk 13s	2.17

CONTRA.

\$33.89

1802.

June. By cash 24s Sept. 3d Cash 120s . . . \$24.00

1804

Apr. 29th. By cash of Samuel A. Bradley . . . 9.64

As the schoolmaster went from home to home, the children were attracted to him. Indeed, this power of drawing children was great through all his after years. One cannot forget in this connection his little grandchild who, on failing to see him as he stopped at the door for a moment, answered the offer of a glittering list of Christmas presents as a pacifier by saying, 'midst deep sobs, "All I want is grandpa in my stocking."

This power that Webster had upon the young was doubtless one reason why, when he was teaching in Fryeburg, he was chosen to deliver the Fourth of July oration. Through the Rev. H. Bernard Carpenter, who lived in Fryeburg some two years ere becoming the pastor of the Hollis Street Church in Boston, we can see this youth of twenty as he stood in the little town meeting house that memorable Independence Day of 1802.

'Twas Magna Charta's morning in July
When, in that temple reared of old to truth,
He rose in the bronze bloom of blood-bright youth
To speak what he re-spoke when death was nigh.
Strongly he stood, Olympian-framed, with front
Like some carved crag where sleeps the lightning's brunt;
Black, thunderous brows, and thunderous, deep-toned speech,
Like Pericles, of whom the people said
That when he spoke it thundered; round him spread
The calm of summer nights, when the stars teach
In music overhead.

The whole audience must have been aroused even at the close of the first paragraph: "Illustrious spectacle! Six millions of people this day surround their altars and unite in an address to Heaven for the preservation of their rights. Every rank and every age imbibe the general spirit. From the lisping inhabitant of the cradle to the aged warrior whose gray hairs are fast sinking in the western horizon of life, every voice is this day tuned to the accents of liberty! Washington! My country!" etc. (see Appendix, 1). In it he dwelt upon the Constitution and the necessity of being true to

it; indeed, it was but the forerunner of the thought expressed some fifty years later when acknowledging a substantial gift from American citizens in appreciation of his public service, he wrote: "Yes, gentlemen, the Constitution and the Union! I place them together. If they stand, they must stand together. If they fall, they must fall together. They are the images which present to every American his surest reliance and his brightest hopes." This thought must have been uppermost in his oration, since a pupil who heard it (Thomas P. Hill) said, years afterward, that the only sentence which had not escaped his memory related to the Constitution. It is a noteworthy fact that the last speech the great statesman made in the Senate (July 17, 1850) closed with the same peroration as this youthful venture. But this was not his first experience; for two years before, when a junior in college, he had delivered a Fourth of July oration before the college faculty and citizens of Hanover, at the unanimous request of the citizens, which has been published these later years.

After having slept in oblivion for some eighty years, the original manuscript of the Fryeburg oration was found, with others of Webster's private papers, in an old junk shop in Boston. It came into the hands of Mr. A. F. Lewis, of Fryeburg, who now owns it as a valued possession. In the Preface to his publication of it, in a pamphlet called *The Illustrated Fryeburg Webster Memorial*, it is said that one enthusiastic farmer who heard the oration ventured the bold remark that Daniel might some day even attain the lofty position

of governor of New Hampshire. Mr. Lewis himself, after saying that it seemed almost incredible that such a production could have emanated from a young man of only twenty years, declares that for "beauty of style, profound thought, logical reasoning and statesmanlike wisdom, the early history of the world's greatest masters may be challenged to produce anything which will bear comparison with this Fryeburg effort." Dr. Samuel Osgood recalled it as having "great merit," and being "a finished production."

Upon the discovery of the long-lost, clearly written manuscript, Whittier, who, as an occasional visitor to Fryeburg, loved the pretty town, wrote Mr. Lewis: "I am heartily glad at the discovery of the oration of the great orator and statesman. It is a very pleasant thing for your beautiful village, which cherishes the memory of its illustrious resident and teacher as one of its most valuable treasures."

When the time of Webster's engagement as principal of the Academy was up, he was earnestly pressed to remain on an increased salary. He had even given the subject a thought in a letter which he signed, Daniel Webster, *Ped.* "What shall I do? Shall I say, 'Yes, gentlemen,' and sit down here and spend my days in a kind of comfortable privacy, or shall I relinquish these prospects and enter into a profession where my feelings will be constantly harassed by objects, either of dishonesty or misfortune, where my living must be squeezed from penury (for rich folks seldom go to law), and my moral principle continually be at hazard? I agree with

you that the law is well calculated to draw forth the powers of the mind; but what are its effects on the heart? Are they equally propitious? Does it inspire benevolence and awake tenderness? or does it, by a frequent repetition of wretched objects, blunt sensibility and stifle the still, small voice of mercy? The talent with which heaven has intrusted me is small, very small; yet I feel responsible for the use of it, and am not willing to pervert it to purposes reproachful or unjust, nor hide it, like a slothful servant, in a napkin." He then tells what draws him to the law. First, it is his father's wish. "He does not dictate, it is true; but how much short of dictation is the mere wish of a parent whose labors of life are wasted on favors to his children?" Secondly, it is the wish of his friends. "They are urgent and pressing." Mr. Thompson, with whom he had studied those four months, even offered his tuition gratis, and to relinquish his stand to him. "If I prosecute the profession," he concludes, "I pray God to fortify me against its temptations. To the winds I dismiss those light hopes of eminence which ambition inspired and vanity fostered. To be honest, to be capable, to be faithful to my client and my conscience, I earnestly hope will be my first endeavor. But let us not rely too much on ourselves; let us look to some less fallible guide to direct us among the temptations that surround us."

Years afterward this serious look at law study was seen in what he wrote his son Edward (September, 1838): "If you intend yourself for the bar you must

begin early to contract a habit of diligent and ambitious study. You must be emulous of excellence. An ordinary lawyer is not an enviable character."

He finally decided to continue the study of law with Mr. Thompson in Salisbury. Before leaving Fryeburg in September, he tells us in his autobiography that his brother Ezekiel came to visit him, and that they made a journey together to the lower part of Maine ere returning to Salisbury. During his life in Fryeburg—not a year in all—he gained, as his pupil Thomas Hill has declared, the "universal respect of both scholars and villagers." On his departure the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, Rev. William Fessenden, whose son Samuel had been one of his pupils, sent him the thanks of the board for his "faithful services while preceptor of Fryeburg Academy." While one of the trustees predicted that he would become the first man in the country, all were impressed with his abilities during his residence there.

Webster did not forget the little school. A few months later, January, 1803, he is writing a friendly letter to his successor, Amos J. Cook, who for more than thirty years was its master. He wondered why he had not heard from him. "But I will pardon you," he writes. "Your entire devotion to business would render you excusable if you should neglect to write even to your sweetheart." After telling pleasant things of mutual friends, Bingham and others, he asks him if he doesn't suppose that he must be "a little envious" of the lustre of his "pedagogical fame." He then writes of his experience in the study of law. "First," he says,

“you must bid adieu to all hopes of meeting with a single author who pretends to elegance of style or sweetness of observation. The language of the law is dry, hard and stubborn as an old maid. Wounded Latin bleeds through every page, and if Tully and Virgil could rise from their graves they would soon be at fisticuffs with Coke, Hale and Blackstone for massacring their language. As to the practice, I believe it a settled matter that the business of an office is conducted with the very refuse and remnant of mankind. However, I will not too far abuse my own profession. It is sometimes lucrative, and if one can keep up an acquaintance with general literature in the meantime, the law may help to invigorate and unfold the powers of the mind.”

When in 1806, and again in 1831, Daniel visited the town, he much enjoyed a call on this schoolmaster friend. Doubtless Mr. Cook showed him the letter he had received from Jefferson, in which he had enclosed not only a letter of Washington's announcing the adoption of the Constitution of the United States by the Federal Convention (it was offered merely for what he asked, a specimen of his handwriting), but had expressed his “every wish for the prosperity of your institution.” Must he not also have showed the letter of John Adams, which had praised one of his pupils?

In this visit of 1831 the little schoolhouse was still standing by the new one, although the following year it was taken down by Jasper Pingree (father of Governor Pingree, of Michigan) and moved to another place for other use. There it remained until destroyed by fire in

1863. Dr. Andrew P. Peabody, of Cambridge, Mass., tells of seeing the little building on wheels, or rollers, ready to be moved on a Monday when he was asked to hold a service in it the preceding Sunday afternoon. We are told that Emerson preached in the little building when in the village. All this must have interested the great statesman in this leisure hour from his public duties. Since his life there he had known great honors and great sorrow. He had written more poetry, but it was of a different order, as seen in the verses written in 1825 on the death of his infant son Charles. (See Appendix, 2.)

In this visit Webster's thought turned much to the natural scenery of the region round about. Being at Dr. Griswold's to tea, he exclaimed all at once, "Your Fryeburg scenery is striking, grand and beautiful; when I was here acting as pedagogue, I suppose I was *ambitious*, and *didn't notice* it!" Yet the nature that had then reached the height of its fame—having just made the great reply to Hayne's speech—must have felt in youth the beautiful, inspiring view from old Jockey Cap and Pine Hill, must have watched the flow of the Saco River as it wound through the town, and have dreamed by the historic banks of Lovewell's pond. He could not have been insensible to beauties which Longfellow, Whittier and Enoch Lincoln have put in verse, which William D. Howells has expressed in prose (in *A Modern Instance*), and which Arlo Bates,—once a teacher in the Academy,—John Colby, Kate Putnam Osgood, Caroline Dana Howe, Rebecca Perley Reed and others have reflected in their writings. But whether he loved nature

as fervently as in the later years, we know that he always loved Fryeburg.

Upon being invited to the Centennial Anniversary of Lovewell's Fight, which the town celebrated in May, 1825, he expressed regret that his engagements in Washington would prevent his attendance; but he added, "I always hear with much satisfaction of the prosperity of your interesting village, and am gratified at this proof that I am not forgotten by those for whom I retain, on my part, an undiminished regard." He then declared that they were "very right" in supposing that a visit to their town would give him pleasure. For several years he said he had intended to make such a visit, and still hoped to do so. "I pray you," he concluded, "to make my remembrance and respects acceptable to friends and neighbors, and allow me to offer to yourselves as to old and well-remembered friends, the assurance of my sincere esteem" (from a letter to Eben Fessenden, Jr., and Robert Bradley, Esq.). Had he been at the celebration he would have heard sung to the air of "Bruce's Address" a poem of six verses, written for the occasion by a youth of eighteen, afterwards known to the world as Henry W. Longfellow, which ended thus:—

And the story of that day
Shall not pass from earth away,
Nor the blighting of decay
Waste our liberty;
But, within the river's sweep,
Long in peace our vale shall sleep,
And free hearts the record keep
Of this Jubilee.

He doubtless would have met this young poet at the social levee at Judge Dana's if not at the ball, which he is said to have attended at the Oxford House. Perhaps he had read in the *Portland Gazette* what he had written five years before on "The Battle of Lovewell's Pond," which, so far as known, were his first verses (Appendix, 3).

At the Semi-centennial Anniversary of the Academy in August 1842, Webster again sent from Washington cordial words of remembrance and friendly greetings: "Long may your Institution flourish in usefulness, and long may health and peace, prosperity and happiness, be the lot of the village." Referring to his "attempt at instructing youth" there, he said: "However successful or unsuccessful I may have been in teaching others, it was not lost time in regard to my own progress. I found in Fryeburg, even at that early day, most of the elements of a happy New England village, which Dr. Belknap has described,—a learned, amiable and excellent minister of the gospel, educated and respectable gentlemen of the other professions, a small but well-selected library, with which I cultivated a useful acquaintance, and a general circle of friendly and agreeable acquaintances." He confessed that to the recollection of such things and such scenes it was impossible to revert without feelings both of gratitude and pleasure. "To all who may remember me," he concludes, "I pray you to give my cordial salutations, and if there be among you any of those who sought to learn Latin or Greek, or to read or cipher, under my veteran tuition,

please say to them that I trust their children have had better instruction than their fathers.’’

On that occasion Rev. Samuel Souther, in his original poem on Memory, thus referred to the school and its master :—

Not few can doubtless well remember when
 The school first met, though fifty years since then
 Have blanched their locks, and on their cheeks which glowed
 Erstwhile with ruddy youth, time’s wrinkle strowed;
 With them let’s turn our eyes, and, as we can,
 Recall the time when first the school began.
 And through remembrance, viewed as through a glass,
 See years long gone again before us pass.
 The humble building stands near yonder hill,
 Whose pines above, around, the prospect fill;
 But can that edifice, so humble, be
 The starting point of our Academy?

* * * * *

Turn round the glass; another teacher now,
 Far younger, fills the chair. Ah! mark that brow.
 That eagle eye,—have you not seen it flash
 In scenes of later life, when, ’mid the clash
 Of high and fierce debate, he met his foe
 In mighty conflict? Then indeed you know
 That this is Webster, yet unknown to fame,
 Before the dawn of his illustrious name.

This reminds one of what H. Bernard Carpenter has said of the schoolmaster in one of his verses on Fryeburg, as found in the Lewis Memorial :—

Twenty rich summers glowed along his veins,
 When from New Hampshire’s high-born hills a youth
 Came down—a seeker and a sayer of sooth—
 To stand beneath these elms, and shake the reins

That guide the heart of boyhood's fiery prime.
They called him Daniel Webster; and the chime
Measured the sliding hours with smooth, slow stroke,
While he sat registering the deed, and wrought
As though the wide world watched him, swift in thought,
But slow in speech; and yet when once he spoke,
Then an archangel taught.

At the Centennial Celebration of the settlement of the town, held in the Chautauqua grounds in 1863, Webster's voice was silent in death; but among the toasts of the evening levee held by the Webster Association of the Academy was, "The memory of Webster—it still lives." Upon his death, eleven years before, the trustees had showed their appreciation of their early teacher by calling a special meeting to express publicly the sense of loss the world had sustained.

Being in Conway the year before he died, Webster had turned to the old town and its people. In a letter to Robert Bradley, Esq., August 17, 1851 (now in the possession of his daughter), he is introducing his son Fletcher and a New York friend, R. M. Blatchford, Esq. "They drive down to Fryeburg," he wrote, "this afternoon to see a place where I lived for some time and the good people who remain who were then my friends." While he was there several of the Board of Trustees of the Academy went to call on him. Upon hearing of an effort to build a new school building, he said that if his official duties would allow he would be present at the dedication to give the opening address, but death prevented. At this time he made inquiries for citizens of the village he had known, among them

being Lieutenant James Walker, to whom he had sold the horse that had borne him first to Fryeburg.

While studying with Mr. Thompson, the young Daniel often despaired of ever making himself a lawyer; he even thought seriously of going back to school-teaching. But he persevered, even though he was "put to study in the old way,—that is, the hardest books first,"—and at last in July, 1804, he found himself in the office of Christopher Gore, in Boston, laying further foundation for his great career. He never taught school again; but it is safe to presume that he ever had a great sympathy for all school-teachers for what he had experienced. Once, in referring to his old teachers, he mentions Mr. Joseph S. Buckminster, of the Exeter Academy, where, when a boy of fourteen, he had spent nine months. He refers especially to his patience with him in the difficulty he had in speaking before the school. "The kind and excellent Buckminster," he says, especially sought to persuade him to perform the exercise of declamation like other boys, but he could not do it. Many a piece did he say over and over again in his own room, but when all eyes were turned upon him in school as his name was called he could not raise himself from his seat. "Sometimes the masters frowned, sometimes they smiled," he says, "but Mr. Buckminster always pressed and entreated with the most winning kindness" for him "to venture only once;" but he could not command sufficient resolution, and when the occasion was over he went home and "wept tears of bitter mortification." At another time he is

writing from Marshfield—1851—to William Sweatt of his early schoolmasters. The thought makes him philosophical. "We belong to the past and to the future as well as to the present," he concludes. . . . "God has given me much to enjoy in this life, and holden out hopes of a better life to come."

It is possible he could not have written that touching letter to his old teacher, Master Tappan, only three months before his death (July, 1852) if he had not known the joy of a teacher's heart in being loved and appreciated. He had learned through the public press that his "old schoolmaster," as he calls him, still enjoyed life, with his "mental faculties bright and vivid." Having just returned from the scenes of his boyhood days, "from the very spot in which he had taught him," where the river and the hills were as beautiful as ever, but where the graves of his father and mother, brothers, sisters and early friends gave it, to him, "something of the appearance of a city of the dead," his letter is tinged with sadness; yet hope arises, and he continues: "But let us not repine. You have lived long and my life already is not short, and we have both much to be thankful for. Two or three persons are still living who, like myself, were brought up *sub tua ferula*. They remember Master Tappan." Then he closes in a strain all the more tender, we are sure, for his own experience. "And now, my good old master, receive a renewed tribute of affectionate regard from your grateful pupil; with his wishes and prayers for your happiness in all that remains to you of this life, and more especially for your

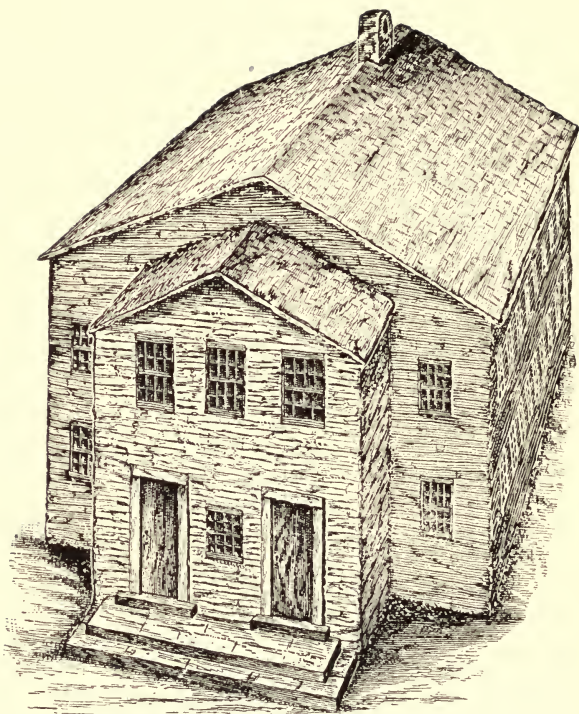
rich participation hereafter, in the more durable riches of righteousness.”

And so through this Fryeburg experience, Daniel Webster, whom America loves to honor as her great expounder of the Constitution, has linked himself to the universal brotherhood of teachers.

That this has become more than a local recognition, was manifested in the centennial observance of the schoolmastership at Fryeburg, as held in the old town in 1902. Prominent public speakers, members of the Academy Alumni of national reputation, honored trustees and pupils from the town and from abroad, all contributed to the fine results obtained. Senator George F. Hoar, in his letter of regret that he could not be present, voiced the opinion of all when he said that no man could recall the noble story of Webster's youth “without a little mist gathering in his eyes.” “It lends a dignity to the streets of your town,” he wrote, “that his feet have been familiar to them.”

THE END.

Appendix



*THE OLD CHURCH IN WHICH THE
ORATION WAS DELIVERED.*

Oration

I.

Delivered in Fryeburg, Maine, July 4, 1802.

FELLOW-CITIZENS :—

It is at the season when Nature hath assumed her loveliest apparel that the American people assemble in their several temples to celebrate the birthday of their nation. Arrayed in all the beauties of the year, the Fourth of July once more visits us. Green fields and a ripening harvest proclaim it, a bright sun cheers it, and the hearts of freemen bid it welcome. Illustrious spectacle! Six millions of people this day surround their altars, and unite in an address to Heaven for the preservation of their rights. Every rank and every age imbibes the general spirit. From the lisping inhabitant of the cradle to the aged warrior whose gray hairs are fast sinking in the western horizon of life, every voice is, this day, tuned to the accents of LIBERTY! WASHINGTON! MY COUNTRY!

Festivals established by the world have been numerous. The coronation of a king, the birth of a prince, the marriage of a princess, have often called wondering crowds together. Cities and nations agree to celebrate the event which raises one mortal man above their heads, and beings called men stand astonished and aghast while the pageantry of a monarch or the jewelled grandeur of a queen poses before them. Such a festival, however, as the Fourth of July is to America, is not found in history: a festival designed for solemn reflection on the great events that have happened to us; a festival in which freedom receives a nation's homage, and Heaven is greeted with incense from ten thousand hearts.

In the present situation of our country, it is, my respected fellow-citizens, matter of high joy and congratulation that there is one day in the year on which men of different principles and different opinions can associate together. The Fourth of July is not an occasion to compass sea and land to make proselytes. The good sense and the good nature which yet remain among us will, we trust, prevail on this day, and be sufficient to chain, at least for a season, that untamed monster, Party Spirit: and would to God that it might be chained for-

ever, that, as we have but one interest, we might have but one heart and one mind!

You have hitherto, fellow-citizens, on occasions of this kind, been entertained with the discussion of national questions; with inquiries into the true principles of government; with recapitulations of the War; with speculations on the causes of our Revolution, and on its consequences to ourselves and to the world. Leaving these subjects, it shall be the ambition of the speaker of this day to present such a view of your Constitution and your Union as shall convince you that you have nothing to hope from a change.

This age has been correctly denominated an age of experiments. Innovation is the idol of the times. The human mind seems to have burst its ancient limits, and to be traveling over the face of the material and intellectual creation in search of improvement. The world hath become like a fickle lover, in whom every new face inspires a new passion. In this rage for novelty many things are made better, and many things are made worse. Old errors are discarded, and new errors are embraced. Governments feel the same effects from this spirit as everything else. Some, like our own, grow into beauty and excellence, while others sink still deeper into deformity and wretchedness. The experience of all ages will bear us out in saying, that alterations of political systems are always attended with a greater or less degree of danger. They ought, therefore, never to be undertaken unless the evil complained of be really felt, and the prospect of a remedy clearly seen. The politician that undertakes to improve a Constitution with as little thought as a farmer sets about mending his plow, is no master of his trade. If that Constitution be a systematic one, if it be a free one, its parts are so necessarily connected that an alteration in one will work an alteration in all; and this cobbler, however pure and honest his intentions, will, in the end, find that what came to his hands a fair and lovely fabric goes from them a miserable piece of patchwork.

Nor are great and striking alterations alone to be shunned.

A succession of small changes, a perpetual tampering with minute parts, steal away the breath though they leave the body; for it is true that a government may lose all its real character, its genius and its temper, without losing its appearance. You may have a despotism under the name of a republic. You may look on a government and see it possess all the external essential modes of freedom, and yet see nothing of the essence, the vitality, of freedom in it: just as you may behold Washington or Franklin in waxwork; the form is perfect, but the spirit, the life, is not there.

The first thing to be said in favor of our system of government is that it is truly and genuinely *free*, and the man has a base and slavish heart that will call any government good that is *not free*. If there be, at this day, any advocate for arbitrary power, we wish him the happiness of living under a government of his choice. If he is in love with chains, we would not deny him the gratification of his passion. Despotism is the point where everything bad centers, and from which everything good departs. As far as a government is distant from this point, so far it is good; in proportion as it approaches towards this, in the same proportion it is detestable. In all other forms there is something tolerable to be found; in despotism there is nothing. Other systems have some amiable features, some right principles, mingled with their errors; despotism is all error. It is a dark and cheerless void, over which the eye wanders in vain in search of anything lovely or attractive.

The true definition of despotism is government without law. It may exist, therefore, in the hands of many as well as of one. Rebellions are despotisms; factions are despotisms; loose democracies are despotisms. These are a thousand times more dreadful than the concentration of all power in the hands of a single tyrant. The despotism of one man is like the thunderbolt, which falls here and there, scorching and consuming the individual on whom it lights; but popular commotion, the despotism of a mob, is an earthquake, which in one moment swallows up everything. It is the excellence of our govern-

ment that it is placed in a proper medium between these two extremes,—that it is equally distant from mobs and from thrones.

In the next place our government is good because it is *practical*. It is not the sick offspring of closet philosophy. It did not rise, vaporous and evanescent, from the brains of Rousseau and Godwin, like a mist from the ocean. It is the production of men of business, of experience, and of wisdom. It is suited to what man is, and what it is in the power of good laws to make him. Its object—the just object of all governments—is to secure and protect the weak against the strong, to unite the force of the whole community against the violence of oppressors. Its power is the power of the nation; its will is the will of the people. It is not an awkward, unshapely machine which the people cannot use when they have made it, nor is it so dark and complicated that it is the labor of one's life to investigate and understand it. All are capable of comprehending its principles and its operations. It admits, too, of a change of men and of measures. At the will of a majority, we have seen the government of the nation pass from the hands of one description of men into those of another. Of the comparative merits of those different men, of their honesty, their talents, their patriotism, we have here nothing to say. That subject we leave to be decided before the impartial tribunal of posterity. The fact of a change of rulers, however, proves that the government is manageable, that it can in all cases be made to comply with the public will. It is, too, an *equal* government. It rejects principalities and powers. It demolishes all the artificial distinctions which pride and ambition create. It is encumbered with no lazy load of hereditary aristocracy. It clothes no one with the attributes of God; it sinks no one to a level with brutes: yet it admits those distinctions in society which are natural and necessary. The correct expression of our Bill of Rights is that men are *born* equal. It then rests with themselves to maintain their equality by their worth. The illustrious framers of our system, in all the sternness of

republicanism, rejected all *nobility* but the nobility of talents, all *majority* but the majority of virtue.

Lastly, the government is one of our choice; not dictated to us by an imperious Chief Consul, like the government of Holland and Switzerland; not taught us by the philosophers, nor graciously brought to us on the bayonets of our magnanimous sister republic on the other side the ocean. It was framed by our fathers for themselves and for their children. Far the greater portion of mankind submit to usurped authority, and pay humble obedience to self-created law-givers: not that obedience of the heart which a good citizen will yield to good laws, but the obedience which a harnessed horse pays his driver,—an obedience begotten by correction and stripes.

The American Constitution is the purchase of American valor. It is the rich prize that rewards the toil of eight years of war and of blood: and what is all the pomp of military glory, what are victories, what are armies subdued, fleets captured, colors taken, unless they end in the establishment of wise laws and national happiness? Our Revolution is not more renowned for the brilliancy of its scenes than for the benefit of its consequences. The Constitution is the great memorial of the deeds of our ancestors. On the pillars and on the arches of that dome their names are written and their achievements recorded. While that lasts, while a single page or a single article can be found, it will carry down the record to future ages. It will teach mankind that glory, empty, tinkling glory, was not the object for which Americans fought. Great Britain had carried the fame of her arms far and wide. She had humbled France and Spain; she had reached her arm across the Eastern Continent, and given laws on the banks of the Ganges. A few scattered colonists did not rise up to contend with such a nation for mere renown. They had a nobler object, and in pursuit of that object they manifested a courage, constancy, and union, that deserve to be celebrated by poets and historians while language lasts.

The valor of America was not a transient, glimmering ray

shot forth from the impulse of momentary resentment. Against unjust and arbitrary laws she rose with determined, unalterable spirit. Like the rising sun, clouds and mists hung around her, but her course, like his, brightened as she proceeded. Valor, however, displayed in combat, is a less remarkable trait in the character of our countrymen than the wisdom manifested when the combat was over. All countries and all ages produce warriors, but rare are the instances in which men sit down coolly at the close of their labors to enjoy the fruits of them. Having destroyed one despotism, nations generally create another; having rejected the dominion of one tyrant, they make another for themselves. England beheaded her Charles, but crowned her Cromwell. France guillotined her Louises, but obeys her Bonapartes. Thanks to God, neither foreign nor domestic usurpation flourishes on our soil!

Having thus, fellow-citizens, surveyed the principal features of our excellent Constitution, and paid an inadequate tribute to the wisdom which produced it, let us consider seriously the means of its preservation. To perpetuate the government we must cherish the love of it. One chief pillar in the republican fabric is the spirit of patriotism. But patriotism hath, in these days, become a good deal questionable. It hath been so often counterfeited that even the genuine coin doth not pass without suspicion. If one proclaims himself a patriot, this uncharitable, misjudging world is pretty likely to set him down for a knave, and it is pretty likely to be right in this opinion. The rage for being patriots hath really so much of the ridiculous in it that it is difficult to treat it seriously. The preaching of politics hath become a trade, and there are many who leave all other trades to follow it. Benevolent, disinterested men! With Scriptural devotion they forsake houses and lands, father and mother, wife and children, and wander up and down the community to teach mankind that their rulers oppress them! About the time when it was fashionable in France to cut off men's heads as we lop away superfluous sprouts from our apple trees, the public attention was excited by a certain

monkey that had been taught to act the part of a patriot to great perfection. If you pointed at him, says the historian, and called him an aristocrat or a monarchist, he would fly at you with great rage and violence; but if you would do him the justice to call him a good patriot, he manifested every mark of joy and satisfaction. But, though the whole French nation gazed at this animal as a miracle, he was, after all, no very strange sight. There are, in all countries, a great many monkeys who wish to be thought patriots, and a great many others who believe them such. But, because we are often deceived by appearances, let us not believe that the reality does not exist. If our faith is ever shaken, if the crowd of hypocritical demagogues lead us to doubt, we will remember Washington and be convinced; we will cast our eyes around us on those who have toiled and fought and bled for their country, and we will be persuaded that there is such a thing as real patriotism, and that it is one of the purest and noblest sentiments that can warm the heart of man.

To preserve the government we must also preserve a correct and energetic tone of morals. After all that can be said, the truth is that liberty consists more in the habits of the people than in anything else. When the public mind becomes vitiated and depraved, every attempt to preserve it is vain. Laws are then a nullity, and Constitutions waste paper. There are always men wicked enough to go any length in the pursuit of power, if they can find others wicked enough to support them. They regard not paper and parchment. Can you stop the progress of a usurper by opposing to him the laws of his country? then you may check the careering winds or stay the lightning with a song. No. Ambitious men must be restrained by the public morality: when they rise up to do evil, they must find themselves standing alone. Morality rests on religion. If you destroy the foundation, the superstructure must fall. In a world of error, of temptation, of seduction; in a world where crimes often triumph, and virtue is scourged with scorpions,—in such a world, certainly, the hope of an hereafter is

necessary to cheer and to animate. Leave us, then, the consolations of religion. Leave to man, to frail and feeble man, the comfort of knowing that, when he gratifies his immortal soul with deeds of justice, of kindness, and of mercy, he is rescuing his happiness from final dissolution and laying it up in Heaven.

Our duty as citizens is not a solitary one. It is connected with all the duties that belong to us as men. The civil, the social, the Christian virtues are requisite to render us worthy the continuation of that government which is the freest on earth. Yes, though the world should hear me, though I could fancy myself standing in the congregation of all nations, I would say: Americans, you are the most privileged people that the sun shines on. The salutary influences of your climate are inferior to the salutary influences of your laws. Your soil, rich to a proverb, is less rich than your Constitution. Your rivers, large as the oceans of the Old World, are less copious than the streams of social happiness which flow around you. Your air is not purer than your civil liberty, and your hills, though high as heaven and deep as the foundations of the earth, are less exalted and less firmly founded than that benign and everlasting religion which blesses you and shall bless your offspring. Amidst these profuse blessings of nature and of Providence, BEWARE! Standing in this place, sacred to truth, I dare not undertake to assure you that your liberties and your happiness may not be lost. Men are subject to men's misfortunes. If an angel should be winged from Heaven on an errand of mercy to our country, the first accents that would glow on his lips would be, BEWARE! be cautious! you have everything to lose; you have nothing to gain. We live under the only government that ever existed which was framed by the unrestrained and deliberate consultations of the people. Miracles do not cluster. That which has happened but once in six thousand years cannot be expected to happen often. Such a government, once gone, might leave a void to be filled, for ages, with revolution and tumult, riot and despotism. The

history of the world is before us. It rises like an immense column, on which we may see inscribed the soundest maxims of political experience. These maxims should be treasured in our memories and written on our hearts. Man, in all countries, resembles man. Wherever you find him, you find human nature in him and human frailties about him. He is, therefore, a proper pupil for the school of experience. He should draw wisdom from the example of others,—encouragement from their success, caution from their misfortunes. Nations should diligently keep their eye on the nations that have gone before them. They should mark and avoid their errors, not travel on heedlessly in the path of danger and of death while the bones of their perished predecessors whiten around them. Our own times afford us lessons that admonish us both of our duty and our danger. We have seen mighty nations miserable in their chains, more miserable when they attempted to shake them off. Tortured and distracted beneath the lash of servitude, we have seen them rise up in indignation to assert the rights of human nature; but, deceived by hypocrites, cajoled by demagogues, ruined by false patriots, overpowered by a resistless mixed multitude of knaves and fools, we have wept at the wretched end of all their labors. Tossed for ten years in the crazy dreams of revolutionary liberty, we have seen them at last awake, and, like the slave who slumbers on his oar and dreams of the happiness of his own blessed home, they awake to find themselves still in bondage. Let it not be thought that we advert to other nations to triumph in their sufferings or mock at their calamities. Would to God the whole earth enjoyed pure and rational liberty, that every realm that the human eye surveys or the human foot treads, were free! Wherever men soberly and prudently engage in the pursuit of this object, our prayers in their behalf shall ascend unto the Heavens and unto the ear of Him who filleth them. Be they powerful or be they weak, in such a cause they deserve success. Yes, “The poorest being that crawls on earth, contending to save itself from injustice and oppression, is an object respectable in the

eyes of God and man." Our purpose is only to draw lessons of prudence from the imprudence of others, to argue the necessity of virtue from the consequences of their vices.

Unhappy Europe! the judgment of God rests hard upon thee. Thy sufferings would deserve an angel's pity, if an angel's tears could wash away thy crimes! The Eastern Continent seems trembling on the brink of some great catastrophe. Convulsions shake and terrors alarm it. Ancient systems are falling; works reared by ages are crumbling into atoms. Let us humbly implore Heaven that the wide-spreading desolation may never reach the shores of our native land, but let us devoutly make up our minds to do our duty in events that may happen to us. Let us cherish genuine patriotism. In that, there is a sort of inspiration that gives strength and energy almost more than human. When the mind is attached to a great object, it grows to the magnitude of its undertaking. A true patriot, with his eye and his heart on the honor and happiness of his country, hath an elevation of soul that lifts him above the rank of ordinary men. To common occurrences he is indifferent. Personal considerations dwindle into nothing, in comparison with his high sense of public duty. In all the vicissitudes of fortune, he leans with pleasure on the protection of Providence and on the dignity and composure of his own mind. While his country enjoys peace, he rejoices and is thankful; and, if it be in the counsel of Heaven to send the storm and the tempest, his bosom proudly swells against the rage that assaults it. Above fear, above danger, he feels that *the last end which can happen to any man never comes too soon, if he falls in defense of the laws and liberties of his country.*

Webster's Poem

II.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS INFANT SON CHARLES

[Written in 1825.]

My son, thou wast my heart's delight,
Thy morn of life was gay and cheery;
That morn has rushed to sudden night,
Thy father's house is sad and dreary.

I held thee on my knee, my son,
And kissed thee laughing, kissed thee weeping.
But, ah! thy little day is done;
Thou'rt with thine angel sister sleeping.

The staff on which my years should lean
Is broken ere those years come o'er me.
My funeral rites thou shouldst have seen,
But thou art in the tomb before me.

Thou rear'st to me no filial stone,
No parent's grave with tears beholdest.
Thou art my ancestor, my son,
And stand'st in Heaven's account the oldest.

On earth my lot was soonest cast,
Thy generation after mine.
Thou hast thy predecessor passed;
Earlier eternity is thine.

I should have set before thine eyes
The road to Heaven, and shown it clear;
But thou untaught spring'st to the skies,
And leav'st thy teacher lingering here.

Sweet seraph, I would learn of thee,
And hasten to partake thy bliss;
And, oh! to thy world welcome me,
As first I welcomed thee to this.

Dear angel, thou art safe in Heaven ;
No prayers for thee need more be said.
Oh ! let thy prayers for those be given
Who oft have blessed thine infant head.

My father, I beheld thee born,
And led thy tottering steps with care.
Before me risen to Heaven's bright morn,
My son, my father, guide me there.

Lovewell's Fight

III.

BY HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

MANY a day and wasted year,
Bright has left its footsteps here
Since was broke the warrior's spear,
And our fathers bled ;
Still the tall trees arching shake
Where the fleet deer by the lake,
As he dashed through bush and brake,
From the hunter fled.

In these ancient woods so bright,
That are full of life and light,
Many a dark, mysterious rite
The stern warriors kept ;
But their altars are bereft,
Fallen to earth and strewn and cleft,
And to holier faith is left
Where their fathers slept.

From their ancient sepulchres,
Where, amid the giant firs,
Moaning loud the high wind stirs,
Have the red men gone.

Towards the setting sun that makes
Bright our western hills and lakes,
Faint and few the remnant takes
 Its sad journey on.

Where the Indian hamlet stood,
In the interminable wood,
Battle broke the solitude,
 And the war-cry rose;
Sudden came the straggling shot
Where the sun looked on the spot
That the trace of war would blot
 Ere the day's faint close.

Low the smoke of battle hung,
Heavy down the lake it swung,
Till the death-wail loud was sung,
 When the night-shades fell;
And the gren pine, waving dark,
Held within its shattered bark
Many a lasting scath and mark
 That a tale could tell.

And the glory of that day
Shall not pass from earth away,
Nor the blighting of decay
 Waste our liberty;
But, within the river's sweep,
Long in peace our vale shall sleep,
And free hearts the record keep
 Of this jubilee.

Poem

IV.

(Written and read by Elizabeth Porter Gould, at Fryeburg, August 14, 1902.)

Preluded with some extemporaneous words leading to the introductory lines of Webster.

"Health to my friends! began my earliest song,
Health to my friends! my latest shall prolong;
Nor health alone—be four more blessings thine,
Cash and the Fair One, Friendship and the Nine.
Are these too little? Dost thou pant for fame?
Give him, ye Powers, the bubble of a name!
Ask all of Heaven an honest man should dare,
And Heaven will grant it, if it hear my prayer."

Thus wrote a youth of twenty,
In 1802.
I think it's worth our reading now—
Don't you?

And this was not the ending
Of what he said that day;
This one of many rhymes he wrote—
His say
On how the world did look to him,
Whose eye of faith had not grown dim,
Whose ear still heard the cherubim.

I think 'twill give him honor,
This 1902,
If we a moment give it now,—
Don't you?

" 'Tis true, let Locke deny it to the last,
Man has three beings, Present, Future, Past.
We are, we were, we shall be; this contains
The field of all our pleasures and our pains.
Enjoyment makes the present hour its own,
And Hope looks forward into worlds unknown;

While backward turned, our thoughts incessant stray,
And 'mid the fairy forms of memory play.
Say, does the present ill affect thee more
Than that impending o'er a future hour?
Or does this moment's blessing more delight
Than Hope's gay vision fluttering in thy sight?
Call now the events of former years to view,
And live in fancy all thy life anew,
Do not the things that many years ago
Gave woe or joy, now give thee joy or woe?
In this review as former times pass by,
Dost thou not laugh again, or weep or sigh?
Dost thou not change, as changing scenes advance,
Mourn with a friend, or frolic at the dance?

.
With present time thus Hope and Memory join,
This to bear back, and that to extend the line."

Thus wrote our Daniel Webster,
In 1802.
I think it's worth our hearing now—
Don't you?

This slender youth of twenty,
So earnest and so wise,
Who, when he lived here someone called
"All-eyes,"
Did not forget to put in rhyme
The little school which took his time,
That Wisdom's hill his "*Zeke*" might climb.

He saw in this loved brother,
A personality rare,
Which he must bring, at any cost,
To share
The education he had won
Through father-love to seeking son;
Reward to him was in *Well Done*.

To be yet still more helpful,
 He wrote in his own hand,
 Some *County Deeds* we see to-day,
 That stand
 As monuments of labor spent
 In evenings which more oft are lent
 To friendship's cheer or frolic's bent.

Who can forget the story
 As told in his own name,
 When later years had brought him wealth,
 And fame,
 How blest he was that day in spring,
 When his first earnings he did bring,
 That "*Zeke*" might Wisdom's anthems sing!

Three hundred fifty dollars
 Was salary for the year,
 With now and then a present given
 For cheer;
 But though the teaching was success,
 And added to his happiness,
 His vision soared. Hear what he says:

"Six hours to yonder little dome a day,
 The rest to books, to friendship, and my tea;
 And now and then, as varying fancies choose,
 To trifle with young Mary or the Muse.
 This life, though pleasant of its kind, is yet
 Much too inactive; I'm resolved to quit.

God gave me pride. I thank Him; if He choose
 To give me what shall make that pride of use,
 Chance and the talent, I'll adore His will;
 If he deny them, I'll adore it still.
 Now Hope leans forward on Life's slender line,
 Shows me a doctor, lawyer or divine,

Ardent springs forward to the distant goal,
But indecision clogs the eager soul."

Thus wrote the Fryeburg teacher
In 1802,
I'm glad his soul was thus revealed—
Aren't you?

For in this revelation,
Faith shows her blessed face,
While Prophecy, with Doubt and Hope,
Has place,
For us to see to-day fulfilled
In act and speech, as lawyer willed,
Or in Congressional halls instilled.

But though this deep-souled nature
Had not yet found its own,
He walked these streets with joyful heart,
Alone,
Or with "Maine misses" fair and gay,
Who joined him in the "balls" and play,
And felt his calm, majestic sway.

But could they understand him?
This serious, high-born youth,
In wonder oft as to life's way,
In truth,
One who could open school with prayer,
And lift a soul profound to share
The atmosphere of those who dare.

His own deep joy in Nature,
As he these hills did roam,
Was tinged with thought of college life,
Of home,

Of worldly honor, gift and name,
Which in the after years became
A hidden power for praise or blame.

'Twas here his *Alma Mater*,
His Dartmouth life so rich,
Became a temple of his mind,
In which
Was held the fire to burst in flame
In its own time and make his name
To rank with Dartmouth and her fame.

'Twas here this youth of twenty,
On Independence Day,
Held in the little meeting-house
Full sway,
Expounding truth which not before
Had come so near the nation's door.
'Tis read to-day as classic lore.

His plea for Constitution
To which his thought did bow,
For years did linger in the town,
Till now
As "Great Expounder" of its laws,
We claim him without price or flaws,
Whenever we his name applause.

With Jefferson as President,
And Washington at rest;
John Adams in his Quincy home,
Time-blest,
How good to have a teacher say
The thought we know as truth to-day,
A hundred years cannot gainsay!

For then, as now, a teacher
Was called to be a guide
To lift the soul to higher life,
Or tide
The waves of feeling and of thought
Which bound the shores of mind when fraught
With depths of life unknown, unsought.

Thus taught our Daniel Webster,
In 1802.
I think he's worth remembering here—
Don't you?

A.

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